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RHHMUNA/HQ USPACOM HONOLULU HI  
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RUYNAAAC/COMNAVFORJAPAN YOKOSUKA JA  
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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 TOKYO 000610

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WHITE HOUSE/NSC/NEC; JUSTICE FOR STU CHEMTOB IN ANTI-TRUST DIVISION;  
TREASURY/OASIA/IMI/JAPAN; DEPT PASS USTR/PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE;  
SECDEF FOR JCS-J-5/JAPAN,  
DASD/ISA/EAPR/JAPAN; DEPT PASS ELECTRONICALLY TO USDA  
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SUBJECT: DAILY SUMMARY OF JAPANESE PRESS 03/07/08

INDEX:

(1) Base-hosting governors to ask gov't for drastic SOFA revision  
(Ryukyu Shimpō)

(2) Joint patrol effective: U.S. consul general in Okinawa (Ryukyu  
Shimpō)

ARTICLES:

(1) Base-hosting governors to ask gov't for drastic SOFA revision

RYUKYU SHIMPO (Page 1) (Full)  
March 7, 2008

An association of governors from 14 prefectures hosting U.S. military bases, chaired by Kanagawa Gov. Shigefumi Matsuzawa, will urgently request the government, the Foreign Ministry, and the Defense Ministry, to carry out a drastic revision of the Japan-U.S. Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) in the wake of a U.S. serviceman's rape of a junior high school girl in Okinawa Prefecture. The association has made annual requests to the Japanese and U.S. governments, including a revision of SOFA provisions. However, it is unusual for the association to make a request concerning a specific incident.

Akira Uehara, chief of the governor's office of Okinawa Prefecture, revealed that plan in his reply to a question asked by Akira Uehara (TN: phonetically same name as the chief of the Okinawa governor's

office) from the Komei Kenmin Kaigi party in a meeting yesterday of the budget committee of Okinawa Prefecture's assembly. After the incident, the Kanagawa prefectural government, which serves as a secretariat to the association, has coordinated a schedule.

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Matsuzawa is thinking of making the request with Okinawa Gov.  
Hirokazu Nakaima.

Following the incident, the Okinawa prefectural government studied specific preventive steps and worked out a 7-point proposal specifying preventive measures in 20 cases. The proposal includes revising the SOFA to turn over U.S. military personnel involved in incidents.

In August last year, the association requested the Japanese government to revise the SOFA as one of its priorities. At the time, the association suggested the necessity of applying environment-related domestic laws and reviewing the scope of jurisdiction. It requested the government to set about a drastic revision the SOFA within a couple of years, or at the earliest possible time, in order to improve SOFA implementation.

(2) Joint patrol effective: U.S. consul general in Okinawa

RYUKYU SHIMPO (Page 2) (Full)  
March 7, 2008

The Japanese government has now proposed conducting joint patrols and installing security cameras to prevent a recurrence of incidents involving U.S. military personnel. "It's effective," Kevin Maher, U.S. consul general in Okinawa, told a regular press conference yesterday. "A working team will discuss specific steps from tomorrow," he said. Okinawa prefectural police, however, are negative about joint patrol because the U.S. military has arrest

TOKYO 00000610 002 OF 002

authority. "I don't get the impression that the prefectural police are concerned about it," Maher said. "It will not lead to a revision of the SOFA," he added, "and we're ready to discuss improvements in the SOFA's implementation at the Japan-U.S. Joint Committee."

On Mar. 3, the U.S. military eased its lockdown. Asked whether the lockdown was effective, Maher said: "We should focus our attention to whether we can take specific steps to prevent incidents, rather than to whether it was (effective). The period of reflection is not to prevent a recurrence but is set to consider whether it is possible for an organization to eliminate crimes. Considering Japanese culture, it's important to reflect." With this, Maher avoided showing his evaluation of the lockdown.

There were incidents (in Okinawa) even during the period of reflection. Concerning this fact, Maher said: "Those who committed crimes had not fully reflected, but I understand that it's necessary for an organization to make still greater efforts."

The U.S. military has decided to continue its investigation into the incident. In this regard, Maher said the U.S. military has yet to decide on whether or not to try the suspect. He added: "Military authorities will objectively take a second look at evidence and will continue to investigate the incident. The U.S. military will judge how to handle this case after seeing evidence and findings from investigations under the U.S. military's law. I will not try to make a guess on the part of the U.S. government." So saying, Maher avoided giving his prediction.

Asked about the possibility of hearing the victim, Maher only said: "That is a legal procedure. I don't want to guess."

SCHIEFFER